

Medicare may soon cover diabetes prevention program

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(HealthDay)—Medicare could soon pay for a program aimed at diabetes

prevention, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced this week.

They pointed to a five-year pilot program that showed older people could reduce their [diabetes risk](#) by losing weight through lifestyle counseling and regular sessions to encourage healthy eating and exercise, the *Washington Post* reported.

The more than 7,770 participants in the program—conducted at YMCAs nationwide—lost an average of about 5 percent of their body weight. It's the first experimental preventive health program to meet the standards to become part of Medicare, the *Post* reported. Expanding the program within Medicare could save \$2,650 over 15 months per beneficiary, compared with current payment models. Those savings would more than cover the program's costs, according to Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell.

When Medicare coverage for the [diabetes prevention](#) program might begin or how it will be funded have not been determined, officials said, according to the *Post*.

More information: [More Information](#)

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